

CLASSIFICATION

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INFORMATION REPORT

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~SECRET~~

COUNTRY Austria/US R/Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 13 JUN 49

SUBJECT USIA Sale of Glassware from the Koerbitz Glass Factory Warehouse in Vienna

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On 2 May 1949, USIA sold the glassware stored in the USIA-controlled Vienna warehouse of the Glasfabriken Oberdorf-Voitsberg Adolf Koerbitz. The glass, valued at approximately 1,500,000 schillings, was sold for 950,000 schillings to Allgemeine Waren und Trohand A.G., a subsidiary firm of the Creditanstalt.*

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Comment: Before 1938, the Bank of Moravia in Brno, Czechoslovakia owned this glass factory in Voitsberg, Styria, then the firm of S. Reich & Co. [redacted] the Soviets had claimed the Vienna warehouse in 1946 as a German asset on the grounds that the subsequent owner, Adolf Koerbitz, had been a Sudeten German. Sometime later, when USIA began to sell large stores of glassware from the Vienna warehouse, the Czechoslovak Government made representations to USIA claiming that the glassware was the rightful property of the Bank of Moravia. Major Alexander Fedotyev, at that time chief of USIA's Legal Section, promised that the sale of the glassware would be halted pending settlement of the Koerbitz factory ownership question through diplomatic channels, and it is possible that some Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement has been reached on the property in Austria. [redacted] the Soviets had asked the Czechoslovak Legation in Vienna to prepare an inventory of Czechoslovak assets in Austria which would be used to clarify and protect Czechoslovak interests at the London treaty negotiations.

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